

MA THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Public Information Department, 11150 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340

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PRESS RELEASE

RICHARD LONG
Through July 20, 1986

A small exhibition of works by contemporary British sculptor Richard Long, on view at The Cleveland Museum of Art through July 20, is the third in a series of exhibitions, begun this year, to acquaint Museum visitors with some of the most significant and original work being done by contemporary artists.

Richard Long, born in 1945 in Bristol, England, is a landscape artist of unconventional methods. Over the past twenty years, he has drawn upon his experiences walking through the English countryside or in wild and remote parts of the world to express certain ideas about the natural environment and man's position in it. His work takes several forms: the walks themselves, in which he may leave some mark of his passage in the form of a pattern of branches or a group of stones arranged in a manner which highlights the features of a particular site; documentation of the walks by means of photographs, maps, and words; and interior floor and wall pieces produced from materials gathered out of doors. All of these works reveal Long's extraordinary sensitivity to nature. The fleeting quality of his art--most of it will in time disappear or be disassembled--serves as a reminder of the transitory nature of living things, of man, and his works.

The two floor sculptures and the two photographic ensembles in this exhibition, lent by Sperone Westwater Gallery, New York City, represent some of Long's most recent work. Willow Line, conceived in 1981, is composed of some two hundred and seventy willow branches gathered on his walks in England and arranged into a rectangle roughly six by fifteen feet. The composition, which is visually compelling as a whole, also invites inspection of its individual elements, which vary in diameter, length, and degree of decay.

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Red-Blue Slate Circle from 1985 is a work incorporating forty-four colorful stones that Long gathered from an upstate New York quarry that he frequents. The irregularly shaped, flat stones, arranged in a circle approximately eight feet in diameter, give a sense of motion and tension, caused by their confinement within the overall form.

Watermarks, composed of two photographs, records some of Long's activities on a trip through Mexico's Sierra Madre Mountains in 1979. In one work, Long poured water onto a dry riverbed, creating five dark shapes resembling animal or human figures. In the other, he threw stones across a river, splashing the opposite riverbank to make an abstract composition. In A Lappland Walk, Long documents through five photographs a trip he made in Finland in 1983. The exterior panels show subtle arrangements of stones made during the journey, while the other images record temporary shapes he made by lying down.

Insights into Long's works, which have been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world, are provided in a free guide to the exhibition prepared by Tom E. Hinson, the Museum's curator of contemporary art, who organized the exhibition. According to Hinson, "Long's solitary, precise, and thoughtful style has expanded the boundaries of sculpture through his choice of materials, sites, and approaches. And through his sharp ability to select, order, and depict, he isolates for the viewer the special visual and spiritual qualities to be found in nature."

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For additional information or photographs, contact the Public Information Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 421-7340.